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**Elizabeth Ramírez Soto and Catalina Donoso Pinto (eds.), *Nomadías: El cine de Marilú Mallet, Valeria Sarmiento and Angelina Vázquez* (Santiago, Chile: Metales Pesados, 2016), pp. 329, pb.**

This collection of essays on the work of three female Chilean filmmakers, Marilú Mallet, Valeria Sarmiento and Angelina Vázquez, provides a thorough and stimulating set of analyses of a body of work that, as the volume's editors argue, has been unfairly neglected by scholarship on Chilean cinema. Elizabeth Ramírez Soto and Catalina Donoso Pinto make a convincing case for viewing Mallet, Sarmiento and Vázquez not just as emblematic filmmakers of Chilean cinema's period of exile (during the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, from 1973 to 1990), but as ground-breaking artists whose experiments with the forms of documentary, melodrama and political cinema are relevant for contemporary feminist movements. The editors acknowledge their debt to the work of Zuzana M. Pick, who provides a prologue to the volume and whose interview with Angelina Vázquez from 1981 is provided in Spanish translation here. Yet there is no doubt that the essays collected here open up fresh methodological and theoretical avenues for analysis. The collection's title refers to Rosi Braidotti's concept of the 'nomadic subject', a form of critical consciousness that refuses to be bound within codified models of thought and behaviour. While Braidotti's work is rarely mentioned after the introduction, the critical approaches taken by the contributors nonetheless highlight the inconformity and hybrid forms of the films discussed here.

The book's first section deals with the work of Marilú Mallet. In his essay, José Miguel Palacios thinks about displacements both physical and metaphorical, as he discusses Mallet's adaptation of her own short story ('De mémoire incomplète') into a film (2, *calle de la memoria* [1996]). Mallet moved to Quebec during Pinochet's rule and has remained there: Palacios' essay (following Pick) takes this condition of displacement as both an uprooting

and a liberation, and proposes the camera's exploration of the spaces of the house and the street as a 'mode of memory'. The next chapter is a translation into Spanish of an essay by Brenda Longfellow on Mallet and the Swiss-Canadian filmmaker Léa Pool, originally published in 1984. Longfellow's reading of Mallet's *Journal inachevé / Diario inacabado* (1983) highlights how the space of the home, for the exiled filmmaker, becomes a compensatory space of refuge and of the creative elaboration of identity. Longfellow's essay is of its time in its somewhat rigid adherence to a psychoanalytical framework (via Hélène Cixous's notion of 'écriture féminine'), but the analysis is nonetheless persuasive. Indeed, Paola Margulis, the author of the following chapter, cites Longfellow in her discussion of space and subjectivity in *Journal inachevé* and *La cueca sola* (2003), a documentary Mallet made in Chile about the experiences of five women who fought against the violence of the Pinochet dictatorship. In her comparative analysis, Margulis invokes Leonor Arfuch's work on 'biographical space' in order to argue that in Mallet's work, public and private spaces serve as a stage on which subjectivity is alternately ratified and plunged into crisis.

The book's second section focuses on Valeria Sarmiento. Valeria de los Ríos addresses the presence of animals in Sarmiento's films, in particular *El hombre cuando es hombre* (1982), which Sarmiento filmed in Costa Rica. After an overview of recent developments in studies of animals within the humanities, de los Ríos argues that the animal presence in the film unsettles traditional distinctions between nature and culture, and by extension between traditional gender roles. This function is of a piece, de los Ríos suggests, with Sarmiento's unsettling of the documentary form through her incorporation of archive footage of Mexican melodramas, and her refusal to provide a clear narrative framework, forcing the spectator to piece together meaning from the elements of the montage. Vania Barraza also discusses Sarmiento's unsettling of the conventions of cinematic genre in her essay on melodrama,

women and the gaze. In her analysis of *Amelia Lopes O'Neill* (1990), Barraza unpicks how Sarmiento creates a multi-level narrative, in which an institutional gaze is subverted by an over-identification of the spectator with the female protagonist, which in turn leads to a degree of defamiliarisation. Mónica Ríos also picks up on ideas of identification and defamiliarisation in her chapter on *Amelia Lopes O'Neill*, which suggests that the film can be thought of as an 'archive of audiovisual forms' that might allow for the recovery of stories excluded from official historical narratives.

In the section on Angelina Vázquez, Laura Senio Blair provides an introduction to the work of this least known of the three filmmakers, who settled in Finland after the coup d'état in 1973. Senio Blair refers to Hamid Naficy's notion of 'accented cinema', which identifies a multi-layered consciousness in the works of exiled or displaced filmmakers, in order to argue that Vázquez's films are both part of the politically engaged New Latin American Cinema, and personal reflections on exile, with a correspondingly dissonant visual aesthetic.

Naficy's work is also important for Elizabeth Ramírez Soto's analysis of the multiple, transnational narrative layers of *Presencia lejana / Etäällä ja läsnä* (1982), which tells the story of Hanna Hietala, a Finnish woman who emigrated to Argentina in the 1930s. Here, as in other chapters, physical displacement is mirrored by effects of alienation and by a defiance of genre norms, as the political documentary meets the cinematic musical. The final chapter in this section is the transcript of a conversation between Pick and Vázquez that took place at the Pésaro film festival in Italy in 1981, and which focuses on *Gracias a la vida* (1980).

The book's final section includes transcripts of conversations with Mallet, Sarmiento and Vázquez, full technical information for each of the films discussed, and a colour dossier of posters, stills, reviews and other written material relating to the three directors. The provision

of this information means that the book is as useful for those who are new to the films discussed as it is for experts in Latin American or Chilean cinema. What is striking throughout the volume is the recurrence of certain critical tropes, from defamiliarisation and the performance of identity to the politicisation of domestic space and the exploration of audiovisual archives. It is intriguing to note (though this is not explicitly stated) that many of these techniques associated with the cinema of exile and displacement have ‘come home’ and have been used to explore the reconfigurations of Chilean identity in the cinema of the last 20 years. There is ample scope, then, for further studies of the legacy and impact of the pioneering filmmakers discussed here. For now, with its theoretical coherence and sophistication, *Nomadías* makes a brilliant case for the importance of Mallet, Sarmiento and Vázquez, and moreover suggests that Chilean cinema studies are in rude health.

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